

**Conference on Effectively Restoring Ecosystems
22-24 August 2000, St. Louis, Missouri**

BACKGROUND

Session: Plenary 9

Topic: Stakeholder Panel

Moderator and Recorder: Ellen Cummings, CECW-PD

Panelists:

- Patrick A. Malone, Manager, Interagency Wetland Program, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Allen Carter, Senior Fisheries Biologist, Office of the Director, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
- K. Douglas Blodgett, Great Rivers Area Director, The Nature Conservancy
- Cheree Peterson, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Objective: Promotion of more effective partnering.

Description: Panelists were requested to discuss partnering experiences with the Corps of Engineers and provide their thoughts with respect to the effective restoration of ecosystems, with a focus on water and related land resources

HIGHLIGHTS

Mr. Malone focused on his experiences working with the St. Louis District on the American Bottom Interior Flood Control and Ecosystem Restoration Project. Among the positive notes are the ecosystem level of analysis, the interagency team approach, and high level of expertise brought to the table by the Corps, including WES. Concerns include the high cost that comes with this expertise, the need for the sponsor to clearly articulate its goals and objectives, and lack of clarity in the Corps' rules for ecosystem restoration projects. He also expressed a desire for sponsors to receive credit for O&M work.

Mr. Carter provided a positive review of ecosystem restoration projects undertaken at five Corps projects in Arkansas. Most of these were pursued under the authority of section 1135 in cooperation with the Little Rock, Vicksburg and Memphis Districts.

Mr. Blodgett summarized some of the national initiatives of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), including the five year Freshwater Initiative, and emphasized the focus on ecological regions. Among its various projects in Illinois, TNC is partnering with the Corps on a section 1135 project at Spunky Bottoms. A nationwide MOU with the Corps is currently being negotiated. In the future, he would like sponsors to have the ability to receive credit for work-in-kind during the planning phase.

Ms. Peterson summarized the organization and mission of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and described how it funds projects with grants that are usually matched two for one. The MOU with the Corps was mentioned. She also explained that the Federal funds received by the NFWF cannot be used as part of the local cost share for a project pursued under a Corps authority. However, the NFWF has non-Federal funds which may be used for such projects. A number of projects were

presented as examples of the type of activities in which the NFWF participates. The NFWF is also involved in regulatory actions, in that it holds funds for mitigation of regulated actions and may be the recipient of court awarded fines in environmental cases.